

United States
Department of
Agriculture



Economic
Research
Service

FANRP 1621

Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program

Fiscal Year 2000

Competitive Grants and Cooperative
Agreements Program: Description
and Application Process



**Food Assistance &
Nutrition Research**

Checklist

All proposals submitted under the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP) must contain the applicable elements described in this brochure. The following checklist has been prepared to assist in ensuring that the proposal is complete and in the proper order prior to mailing:

- ✓ Application for Funding Cover Page
 - Is all required information accurate and complete?
 - Have all principal investigators and the authorized organizational representative signed the Cover Page?
 - Is this a developmental award application?
 - Does one copy contain pen-and-ink signatures?
 - Have you included a telephone number, fax number, and/or email address where a message may be left for you?
- ✓ Table of Contents
 - Are page numbers included for each item?
- ✓ Project Summary
 - Has the Project Summary been included?
 - Do the name and institution of all investigators appear on the page, or on the following page?
 - Does it include research objectives?
 - Is it no more than 250 words?
- ✓ Project Description
 - Is the project fully described?
 - Does this section adhere to the format and page limitations, as specified?
 - Does this section begin as page 1, as specified?
 - Does it contain a tentative schedule or workplan of major steps of study?
- ✓ Citations to Project Description
 - Are all references cited?
 - Are all citations referenced?
 - Do all citations contain a title and are they in accepted journal format?
- ✓ Documentation from Collaborator(s), or Host Institution (where appropriate)
- ✓ Vitae and Publications List(s)
 - Are vitae included for all investigators, senior associates, and other key project personnel (including subcontractors—see instructions)?
 - Are the vitae current and pertinent?
 - Are the publications lists complete and limited to the last 5 years?
- ✓ Budget (form ARS-455)
 - Are budget items complete?
 - Is the summary budget included?
 - Is the funding level total in line N within the stated limit of \$400,000 for the duration of the project proposal?
 - Is the budget duration within the stated limit of 3 years?
- ✓ Indirect Cost Rate Schedule
 - For reimbursement of indirect costs, is a copy included of the applicant's indirect cost rate schedule that reports the applicant's federally negotiated audited rate?
- ✓ General
 - Does the proposal conform to all format and page limitations and deadline requirements?
 - Are there an original and 12 copies?
 - Are all copies complete?

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SAMPLE ONLY
DATE

Overview

Applications are invited for competitive grant and cooperative agreement awards from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for fiscal year 2000. This document provides background on the research areas of interest to the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP), application procedures, deadlines for submission, and guidance for the application process.

USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) anticipates awarding between \$2 million and \$3 million in fiscal 2000 for competitive grants and cooperative agreements. ERS will accept proposals under this program for funding levels between \$100,000 and \$400,000 (for the duration of the grant and/or the cooperative agreement, not to exceed 3 years). ERS will also consider supporting up to three research projects in the range of \$100,000 to \$150,000 for the development of expertise by newly-graduated researchers or by senior researchers who are new to food assistance and nutrition issues. Applications intended for consideration for a developmental award must state that intention in the cover page. Parties interested in smaller grants should consult the ERS home page on the Internet at www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/foodasst.

Authority

The authority for this program is contained in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, Fiscal 2000 (P.L. 106-78). Under this program, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary may award competitive grants and cooperative agreements for the support of research projects to further USDA programs, especially the Food Stamp Program (FSP), Child Nutrition Programs (School Breakfast, National School Lunch, Summer Feeding, and Adult/Child Care Feeding), and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Proposals may be submitted by any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal agencies, private organization, corporation, or individual.

Applicable Federal Statutes, Regulations, and Guidelines

Applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and guidelines include the following:

- (a) guidelines to be followed when submitting grant proposals and cooperative agreements and rules governing the evaluation of proposals;
- (b) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations, 7 CFR 3019;
- (c) the USDA Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations, 7 CFR Part 3015;
- (d) the USDA Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 7 CFR Part 3016; and
- (e) Cooperative Research Agreement 7 USC 3318b.

Priority Research Program Areas

ERS is accepting proposals for support of high-priority research of importance to USDA's food assistance and nutrition programs in four research areas. Anticipated funding in fiscal 2000 for competitive grants and cooperative agreements will be between \$2 million and \$3 million.

The research areas listed below highlight the research priorities for which ERS has determined that competitive grants or cooperative agreements are appropriate. ERS is especially interested in proposals that make use of longitudinal data or that make creative and innovation linkages between data sets, such as links between administrative data sets from various USDA programs or links between administrative and survey data. The suggested topics and questions are not meant to be exhaustive. Applicants are encouraged to make persuasive justifications for other relevant research in their proposals.

FANRP has a wide variety of ongoing research projects. To avoid duplication, applicants are encouraged to read project descriptions in the "Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program, Final Report: Fiscal 1999 Activities." The report is available on the FANRP website at www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/foodasst.

Applicants may address multiple issues, but must specify one of the four priority research areas below:

- I. Reaching Underserved Populations
 - A. Reaching the Elderly
 - B. Reaching the Working Poor
 - C. Reaching Female Teens
- II. Food Programs as a Safety Net and Client Well-Being
 - A. Assessing Multiple Food Assistance Program Participation
 - B. Understanding Causes and Consequences of Food Insecurity
 - C. Coping With Limited Resources
- III. Child Nutrition
 - A. Impact of the School Lunch Environment on School Lunch Program Participation
 - B. Reducing the Prevalence of Obesity Among WIC Children
 - C. Mothers' Work, Time Constraints, and Child Nutrition
- IV. Behavioral Nutrition
 - A. Economics of Food Choices
 - B. Social Marketing and Market Segmentation Research
 - C. Eating Patterns, Dietary Quality, and Obesity
 - D. Obesity, Food Insecurity, and Food Assistance

I. Reaching Underserved Populations

A. Reaching the Elderly

Elderly people make relatively little use of the Food Stamp Program (FSP) as measured by the percentage of eligible people who participate in the program. Research is needed to determine the extent to which the nutrition needs of the elderly are underserved, and to identify not only the determinants that contribute to their low participation but also the



relative importance of the various factors. In order to anticipate the unique needs of the aging “baby-boomers,” studies that distinguish between the effects of aging per se and the effects of being a member of the cohort that is currently elderly are of special interest. Research is also needed regarding development of effective strategies for increasing elderly participation in the FSP, such as streamlining the food stamp application process, shifting the form in which benefits are provided, and identifying alternative ways of assisting the elderly to access existing benefits. In addition, to develop outreach policies and materials for the elderly, basic social marketing research is needed on the elderly’s perceptions, knowledge, attitudes, emotions, concerns, and motivations that pertain to program participation.

B. Reaching the Working Poor

The concurrent effects of a strong economy and welfare reform have increased the number of the working poor among food stamp clientele. Nevertheless, the percentage of eligible working poor households that participate in the FSP remains relatively low. Research is needed on participation and access issues for the working poor in general, and for nonparticipating working poor households in particular. What are their work and earnings patterns, FSP participation histories, family compositions, current benefit levels (perceived and potential), direct and indirect costs for FSP participation, time allocation issues, barriers to participation, food spending levels, and prevalence and severity of food insecurity? Research is also needed to evaluate the extent to which administrative actions taken in July 1999 have improved access for the working poor. These actions included new guidance making it easier for families to own a reliable car, new options allowing States to simplify income reporting rules, and a public outreach campaign to clarify the food stamp law’s access requirements. FANRP has studies underway that examine local office practices; research on other program access issues for the working poor is welcomed.

C. Reaching Female Teens

Female teens have low participation rates in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program. Teenage girls also tend to have high rates of eating disorders, to skip lunch, and to have low levels of calcium intake. Research is needed on strategies that would allow food assistance programs to better reach teenage girls, and the potential costs and nutritional benefits of such strategies. For example, modifications to the school meal programs, or improvements in how the benefits of the program are communicated, might increase the attractiveness of school meals among teenage girls, increase their participation rates, and yield nutritional benefits. Similarly, it has been suggested that the success of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) in improving birth outcomes among pregnant women might be expanded if the program were to reach female teens (and other women) *before* they become pregnant.

II. Food Programs as a Safety Net and Client Well-Being

A. Assessing Multiple Food Assistance Program Participation

Studies examining the feasibility of linking administrative data from the major USDA food assistance programs are of interest, as are more general proposals that advance the understanding of multiple-program participation, for which research on adjunctive (cross-program) eligibility is of interest. Data for describing and understanding multiple program participation are sparse, but with recent expansion of case management information systems, introduction of point-of-sale software for school meals, and implementation of electronic benefit transfer systems for WIC and food stamps, there is new research potential. Proposals that explore the feasibility of combining administrative data

for the major food assistance programs to describe characteristics of participants, participation dynamics, or timing of receipt and use of benefits are of special interest. Analytic studies of existing data sources are also welcome. For example, analyses of the effect of food assistance programs on food insecurity and food expenditures have generally focused on the Food Stamp Program (FSP). Such a focus often ignores the fact that the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP) can make a substantial contribution to household food resources by providing children with up to 10 meals each week. Other USDA food assistance programs (e.g., WIC, the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program, and food distribution programs) expand household resources as well. Studies are needed that evaluate multiple program impacts and/or participation decisions.

B. Understanding Causes and Consequences of Food Insecurity

Since 1995, USDA has sponsored annual survey supplements to the Current Population Survey to assess the prevalence and severity of food insecurity in the United States. Substantial investments have also been made to incorporate food security measures into other national surveys (e.g., NHANES, CSFII, ECLS, SPD, PSID). Research is needed on such topics as the complex interactions between food insecurity and food assistance programs, the uneven temporal incidence of food insecurity, and the relationship of food insecurity to food expenditures and/or labor force activities. Studies examining linkages between community characteristics and food insecurity are also of interest. (Further information on food insecurity data and research can be found at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/foodsecurity>.)

C. Coping with Limited Resources

When facing limited resources, households make choices and undertake strategies to minimize and ameliorate the effects of those constraints. These strategies include adjustments to diet quality and quantity, trading off food expenditures for other (nonfood) necessities such as housing and medical care, and drawing on support from friends and family. Another set of strategies involves participating in government programs for food and nutrition assistance, cash welfare, Medicaid, and/or housing assistance, as well as drawing on community emergency food resources. In addition to quantitative analyses of existing data, there is need for qualitative studies that document and explain in greater detail the coping process. Studies that broaden our understanding of general well-being by developing and associating alternative measures of well-being with food insecurity are also of interest.

III. Child Nutrition

A. The Impact of the School Lunch Environment on School Lunch Program Participation

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the school lunch environment may influence the decision of whether a child obtains a school lunch as well as how much of the food the child eats. Research is needed to evaluate the importance of school lunch environment factors, such as the quality and choices of foods served, the time lunch is served, how much time children have to eat, whether lunch is after recess, the ambiance of the cafeteria, the availability of competitive foods, and, for older children, whether an open-campus policy is adopted officially or de facto. Studies are also encouraged to include a section that suggests creative alternatives to address the problems identified by the study.



B. Reducing the Prevalence of Obesity Among WIC Children

An increasing proportion of children who participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) are overweight or obese, yet little is known regarding the factors that contribute to a child's becoming overweight or obese during the preschool years. FANRP is particularly interested in better understanding the role of factors that might be amenable to change through WIC's nutrition education activities. For example, how does breastfeeding affect the likelihood of a child being obese at 2-5 years old? What other feeding practices influence the likelihood of a preschool child becoming obese? What are some of the parental attitudes and perceptions about appropriate feeding practices or what constitutes a "healthy" child, and what are some of the sources of knowledge that influence parents' perceptions and practices? What market research would be needed to develop an enhanced program of nutrition education activities aimed at reducing the prevalence of overweight and obesity among children who participate in WIC?

C. Mother's Work, Time Constraints, and Child Nutrition

As increasing numbers of mothers join the labor force, less time is available for food preparation and other activities. Some working mothers may transfer some of the food preparation responsibilities to other household members or to day-care providers and schools. In some cases, relatively young children may be responsible for shopping and preparing their own meals, which may affect the types of foods they eat, food costs, and the quality of their overall diet. Working mothers may depend more heavily on foods that require less time to prepare, such as prepared foods (either from the grocery store or from food service establishments, such as fast food restaurants and take-out). Earlier FANRP research shows that away-from-home foods are typically higher in fat and saturated fat and lower in calcium, fiber, and iron than home foods, so an increased consumption might adversely affect diet quality. In addition, children of working mothers may also spend more time watching television, which may potentially affect the child's energy balance. Research is needed to understand how households with working mothers, particularly low-income mothers, cope with the increased time constraints associated with labor force participation, the role and nutritional contribution of foods provided by day-care providers and schools, and the effects of such coping strategies on their children's dietary patterns, diet quality, and obesity.

IV. Behavioral Nutrition

A. Economics of Food Choices

Given the marked changes in dietary patterns of Americans during the last quarter century, research is needed to understand the roles played by various determinants, such as expansion of food assistance programs; changes in prices, incomes, and education; increased accessibility of fast food; age and/or cohort effects; increased labor force participation by women; regulatory actions by the Government; expansions in nutrition knowledge; and changes in tastes. What have been the returns to food assistance programs and nutrition information programs? Have the effects of education or income on diet choices changed over time? How do these effects differ across sociodemographic groups? Can food assistance programs use economic incentives to promote more healthful eating patterns? Another area of particular interest is the public and private costs and benefits of healthful diets for low-income households; special attention could be devoted to the types of opportunity costs that low-income households face, such as medical or housing needs that compete for food in the household's budget. In addition, studies are needed on the roles played by cultural, social, and psychological factors that may be more profound for food

choices than for other consumption behaviors. Research is needed as well on the intertemporal costs and benefits of food choices. Do consumers recognize that food intakes in the current period have long-term health consequences, and do their current food choices reflect intertemporal tradeoffs? Do sociodemographic groups differ in the extent to which their food choices incorporate intertemporal tradeoffs?

B. Social Marketing and Market Segmentation Research

Research is needed to improve our understanding of the needs, wants, perceptions, knowledge, attitudes, emotions, concerns, and motivations of food assistance clientele relating to overcoming barriers to healthy eating. One needed step is the development of sociodemographic/lifestyle stratifications and/or market segments for use in social marketing of nutrition education and program outreach, with the objective of improving eating patterns and diet quality.

C. Eating Patterns, Dietary Quality, and Obesity

Research is needed to identify “eating patterns” that show a strong association with diet quality and/or obesity. For example, research suggests that younger children have a better diet quality (as measured by the USDA Healthy Eating Index, or HEI) than teenagers, that individuals who eat breakfast tend to have better diet quality, and that variety in vegetable intake (excluding potatoes) is negatively associated with BMI. Concerns have been raised that high intake of added sugars may have a negative impact on diet quality, and that consumption of soft drinks is displacing milk consumption, although little is known about how intake and sources of added sugars (or sugar substitutes) influence diet quality and/or obesity, or whether individuals who stop consuming soft drinks would replace it with milk. The ability to identify “typologies” of eating patterns that are associated with diet quality and/or obesity may be helpful in categorizing individuals for better targeting of nutrition information, for program design, and for service delivery.

D. Obesity, Food Insecurity, and Food Assistance

The growing prevalence of obesity, and its occurrence at earlier ages, is of concern to public health officials. Analysis of cross-sectional data, such as the CSFII or NHANES, is useful in identifying some of the behavioral choices that are associated with the *presence* of obesity, but are not useful for explaining what behavioral choices are associated with the *development* of obesity. For example, cross-sectional data do not allow the researcher to determine whether certain dietary patterns (such as high intake of calories from fat) or activity levels influence the development of obesity, or if instead the dietary patterns or activity levels are consequences of being overweight or obese (for example, obese individuals may seek comfort in high-fat foods). Such behaviors may involve food insecurity as well. Some have hypothesized that people who are frequently food insecure may have irregular diets with feast/famine cycles that may ultimately result in obesity. To better understand the temporal issues, a longitudinal perspective is needed. FANRP is interested in funding research to analyze data from longitudinal studies—such as the Framingham Study, MR. FIT, or the Nurses’ Health Study—that might provide insights on the factors associated with the development of obesity. Of particular interest is understanding the roles that food insecurity and food assistance programs may play in the development or prevention of obesity.



Eligibility Requirements, Award Types, and Overhead and Other Costs

The Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP) may award competitive grants or cooperative agreements under this announcement. **Applicants need not specify the type of award in their proposal. FANRP reserves the right to determine the type of award.** The type of award made for a selected proposal will be governed by the nature and degree of involvement desired by FANRP in the project and the type of institution requesting funding (see “Authority,” p. 1). In accordance with Federal statutes, the amount of overhead ERS will pay is governed by the type of award and the type of institution receiving the award.

Proposals may be submitted by any State agricultural experiment station, college, university, other research institution or organization, Federal, State, or county agencies, private organization, corporation, or individual.

Proposals submitted by non-United States organizations will not be considered. The research proposed must be designed specifically for the Priority Research Program Areas described previously.

Proposals may include requests for conferences that bring together members of the interested research community to identify research needs, update information, or advance an area of research recognized as an integral part of the research effort.

Types of Awards

- **Competitive Grants:** Competitive grants will be supported when the research topic does not require substantial involvement between ERS staff and the recipient during the performance of the award.
- **Cooperative Agreements:** Cooperative agreements will be supported when the research topic requires more substantial involvement between ERS and the investigators. There are two types of cooperative agreements: cooperative research agreements and cooperative assistance agreements. In a cooperative research agreement, ERS staff and extramural researchers are close collaborators; in a cooperative assistance agreement, the extramural researchers are responsible for conducting the greater part of the work on the project. Cooperative research agreements require both parties to contribute to the funding of the project; cooperative assistance agreements do not have this joint funding requirement.

Overhead and Other Costs

Federal statutes dictate the amount of overhead that ERS pays by type of award and institution. In cooperative research agreements, ERS pays no overhead to State cooperative institutions (i.e., land-grant universities and their constituent schools and departments); up to 10 percent of total direct costs as overhead to nonprofit institutions other than State cooperative institutions; and the federally negotiated audited rate to other institutions. In competitive grants and cooperative assistance agreements, ERS pays the federally negotiated audited rate. For reimbursement of indirect costs, the applicant must include a copy of its indirect cost rate schedule with the application.

ERS does not pay tuition remission/reimbursement under any class of agreement.

Peer Review of Applications

All proposals received will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgment within 30 days of the submission deadline, please contact the FANRP office at (202) 694-5270 or email: FANRP@ers.usda.gov. Prior to technical examination, a preliminary review will be made for responsiveness to the Priority Research Program Area (for example, relationship of the proposal to one of the four research areas and proposed requirements).

Proposals that do not fall within the guidelines as stated in this document will be eliminated from program competition, and the applicant will be notified in writing.

Peer review panels will be convened to review proposals in each research area. All applicants will be notified in writing by October 31, 2000, as to whether their proposal has been accepted for an award by FANRP.

Peer review panel members will be selected based on their training and experience in relevant research or technical fields, taking into account the following factors:

- The level of formal social science or technical education and other relevant experience of the individual as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research and other relevant activities;
- The need to include as peer reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant social science or technical fields;
- The need to include as peer reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (for example, universities, industry, private consultant(s), and geographic locations); and
- The need to include as peer reviewers individuals with relevant program knowledge and experience.

During the peer evaluation process, extreme care will be taken to prevent any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may affect review or evaluation. Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as proposal content and individual peer evaluations, will be kept confidential.



Evaluation Factors & Criteria

The proposal evaluation process includes both internal staff review and evaluation by peer review panels with members drawn from universities, industry, private consultants, and Government officials. Peer review panels will be selected and structured to provide expertise and objective judgment in the evaluation of the proposals.

The peer review panel will use the following criteria and weights to evaluate proposals (100 points total):

Research Merit of the Proposal (weight: 35 points)

This criterion is used to assess the conceptual adequacy of the hypothesis or research question, the clarity and delineation of objectives, the adequacy of the description of the undertaking, and how the anticipated results will advance policy knowledge and the development and implementation of programs. Background information should be brief for proposals that address one of the topics described on pages 2-5; a more extensive justification is needed for a proposal with a non-listed topic.

Overall Approach (weight: 30 points)

This criterion relates to the probability of success of the project; time allocated for systematic attainment of objectives; analytic approach; and research design, appropriateness of data, and suitability and feasibility of methodology.

Workplan, Budget, and Cost-Effectiveness (weight: 15 points)

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost-effective. Reviewers will evaluate if the workplan is reasonable and sufficient to ensure timely implementation and completion of the study.

Key Personnel (weight: 10 points)

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of the key persons who will carry out the project.

Institutional Commitment and Resources (weight: 10 points)

This criterion relates to the institution's experience and competence in the subject area and the adequacy of available or attainable support personnel, facilities, and instrumentation.

How to Obtain Application Materials

Please note that this document, with a downloadable budget form, is available on the ERS website at www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/foodasst. Photocopies of materials and budget form are acceptable. Paper copies may also be requested from:

Ms. Cathi Ferguson
FANRP/ERS
1800 M Street, NW, Room N2129
Washington, DC 20036-5831
Telephone: (202) 694-5270
Fax: (202) 694-5677
Email: FANRP@ers.usda.gov

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OUT OF DATE



Application Process

Overview

These guidelines are provided to assist you in preparing a proposal to the Competitive Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program of the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program. Please read these guidelines carefully before preparing your submission.

The necessary information for completing a proposal is included on the inside of the front cover, and an ARS-455 budget form is included.

Submission Requirements

The purpose of a grant or cooperative agreement proposal is to persuade FANRP and members of the food assistance and nutrition research community who provide advice to FANRP that the proposed project is important, methodologically sound, and worthy of support under the criteria listed on page 9. Therefore, the proposal must be submitted in response to one of the four Priority Research Program Areas (p. 2). The application should be self-contained, should clearly present the merits of the proposed project, and should be written with care and thoroughness. It is important that all essential information for comprehensive evaluation be included. Omissions often result in processing delays and may jeopardize funding opportunities.

In preparing the proposal, applicants are urged to ensure that the name of the principal investigator and, where applicable, the name of the submitting institution are included on the Application for Funding Cover Page *and at the top of each page*. This will permit easy identification in the event that the application becomes disassembled during the review process.

Format and Contents of Proposals

Application for Funding Cover Page

Each copy of the proposal must contain an Application for Funding Cover Page. This is designed by the applicant but must be the first page of the application. At least one copy of this information must contain pen-and-ink signatures as outlined below. This cover page must include the following information:

- *Title of Proposal.* The title of the proposal must be brief (80-character maximum), yet represent the major thrust of the project. Because this title will be used to provide information to those who may not be familiar with the proposed project, highly technical words or phraseology should be avoided where possible. In addition, phrases such as “investigation of” or “research on” should not be used.
- *Statement of Whether This is a Developmental Award Application.*
- *Program to Which You Are Applying.* “FANRP”
- *Priority Research Program Area.* Choose the one research area that is most appropriate to the research being proposed (Reaching Underserved Populations, Food Programs as a Safety Net and Client Well-Being, Child Nutrition, or Behavioral Nutrition). It is important that only one research area be selected. When the appropriateness of the chosen research area may be in question, the final program area assignment will be

made by the FANRP staff. The principal investigator will be informed of any changes in assigned research area.

- *Principal Investigator(s)/Project Director(s).* List the name(s) of the proposing principal investigator(s). If there is more than one investigator, all must be listed and all must sign the Application for Funding Cover Page. Co-principal investigators should be limited to those required for major research collaboration; minor collaborators or consultants are more appropriately designated as collaborators (see p. 14). Only the principal investigators listed will receive direct correspondence from FANRP.
- *Contact Information.* Please list the telephone and fax numbers and the email address (if available) of the principal investigator(s). In addition, please include a telephone number where a message can be left, if different from above.
- *Signatures.* Sign and date the Application for Funding Cover Page. All proposals must be signed by the proposing principal investigator(s) and, for those proposals being submitted through institutions or organizations, endorsed by the authorized organizational representative who possesses the necessary authority to commit the applicant's time and other relevant resources. Investigators who do not sign the Application for Funding Cover Page will not be listed on the grant or cooperative agreement award document in the event that an award is made. Proposals that do not contain the signature of the authorized organizational representative cannot be considered for support.

Table of Contents

A Table of Contents, itself unpaginated, should be placed immediately after the Application for Funding Cover Page. This table should direct the reader to the pages for all sections of the proposal, beginning with the Project Description on page 1.

Project Summary

The proposal must contain a Project Summary, and must be assembled as the third page of the proposal (immediately after the Table of Contents) and should not be numbered. The names and institutions of all principal and co-investigators should be listed on the summary page (if space is insufficient, please use a separate sheet immediately following the Project Summary in the proposal). The project summary is limited to 250 words. The summary is not intended for the general reader; consequently, it may contain technical language comprehensible by persons in disciplines relating to the food and agricultural sciences. The project summary should be a self-contained, specific description of the activity to be undertaken and should focus on:

- Overall project goal(s) and supporting objectives; and
- Plans to accomplish project goal(s).

The importance of a concise, informative project summary cannot be overemphasized.

Project Description

The written text may not exceed 15 pages (whether single- or double-spaced). The proposal should be assembled so that the Project Description immediately follows the Project Summary. To clarify page limitation requirements, page numbering for the Project Description should start with 1, and should be placed on the bottom of the page. The 15-page limitation does not include figures, tables, or attachments such as the survey instrument (if relevant). All proposals are to be submitted on standard 8½" x 11" paper. In addition, margins must be at least 1 inch, type size must be 12 point (equivalent to this size for some



printers is 10 pitch or 10 characters per inch, which is also acceptable), there should be no more than 6 lines per inch, and there should be no page reductions. The project description must contain the following components:

- *Introduction.* A clear statement of the long-term goal(s) and supporting objectives or research questions of the proposed project should be included. The most significant published work in the field under consideration, including the work of key project personnel on the current application, should be reviewed. The current status of research in this field should also be described.
- *Rationale and Significance.* Concisely present the rationale behind the proposed research. The objectives' specific relationship to the potential long-term improvement in the efficiency of the USDA's food assistance and nutrition programs should be shown clearly. These purposes are described under Research Priorities on page 2. Any novel ideas or contributions that the proposed project offers should also be discussed in this section.
- *Research Methods.* The hypotheses or questions being asked and the methodology being applied to the proposed project should be stated explicitly. Specifically, this section must include:
 - A description of the research proposed in the sequence in which it is to be performed;
 - Techniques to be used in carrying out the proposed project, including the feasibility of the techniques;
 - Explanation of data collection methods, including interviewer training, sample design and selection, and measures for obtaining adequate response rates (for proposed projects that plan to collect survey data);
 - Results expected;
 - Means by which data will be analyzed or interpreted;
 - Discussion of relevant variables and of model specification issues (for proposed projects that plan to use multivariate analysis);
 - Possible application of results;
 - Pitfalls that may be encountered;
 - Limitations to proposed procedures; and
 - A tentative schedule or workplan for conducting major steps of study.

In describing the research plan, the applicant must explain fully any materials, procedures, situations, or activities that may be hazardous to personnel (whether or not they are directly related to a particular phase of the proposed project), along with an outline of precautions to be taken to avoid or mitigate the effects of such hazards.

Note: The sections detailed below are not included in the page limitations for the Project Description section.

Citations to Project Description

All references cited should be complete, including titles and all co-authors, and should conform to an accepted journal format.

Collaborative Arrangements

If the nature of the proposed project requires collaboration or subcontractual arrangements with other research scientists, corporations, organizations, agencies, or entities, the applicant must identify the collaborator(s) and provide a full explanation of the nature of the collaboration. Evidence (that is, letters of intent) should be provided to assure peer reviewers that the collaborators involved have agreed to render this service.

When a project requests funds for multiple institutions, a lead institution must be designated. Only one proposal may be submitted for the project and only from the lead institution. Other institutions may be designated as subcontractors. Proposals with Application for Funding Cover Pages from more than one institution are not permitted and will be returned without review. Identical proposals submitted by different investigators from different institutions are also not permitted and will be returned without review.

Vitae and Publications List(s)

To assist peer reviewers in assessing the competence and experience of the proposed project staff, all personnel who will be involved in the proposed project must be identified clearly. For each principal investigator listed on the Application for Funding Cover Page, for all collaborators and other senior personnel who expect to work on the project in a significant fashion (for instance, expectation of co-authorships on ensuing publications) whether or not funds are sought for their support, and for all subcontractors, the following should be included:

- *Curriculum Vitae (CV)*. The curriculum vitae should be limited to a presentation of academic and research credentials, such as educational, employment, and professional history, honors, and awards. The vitae shall be no more than two pages each in length, excluding publications listings; and
- *Publications List(s)*. A chronological list of all publications in refereed journals during the past 5 years, including those in press, must be provided for each professional project member for whom a curriculum vitae is provided. Also list only those non-refereed technical publications relevant to the proposed project. All authors should be listed in the same order as they appear on each paper cited, along with the title and complete references as these usually appear in journals.

Budget (Form ARS-455)

A summary budget is required detailing requested support for the overall project period, which is not to exceed 3 years. Funding levels accepted are between \$100,000 and \$400,000 for the duration of the project (not to exceed 3 years). ERS will also consider supporting up to three research projects in the range of \$100,000 to \$150,000 for the development of expertise by newly-graduated researchers or by senior researchers who are new to food assistance and nutrition issues.



Funds may be requested under any of the budget categories listed, provided that the item or service requested is identified as necessary for successful conduct of the proposed project, allowable under applicable Federal cost principles, and not prohibited under any applicable Federal statute or regulation.

Budget items include:

- Salaries and wages
- Nonexpendable equipment
- Materials and supplies
- Domestic travel
- Publication costs/page charges
- Computer costs
- Other direct costs
- Indirect costs
- Cost sharing (ignore this category, not applicable for FANRP)

Salaries of faculty members and other personnel who will be working on the project may be requested in proportion to the effort they will devote to the project.

This form is included as an insert to this brochure. Also see page 10 to obtain a paper copy or an electronic copy.

Indirect Cost Rate Schedule

For reimbursement of indirect costs, the applicant must include with the application a copy of its indirect cost rate schedule that reports the applicant's federally negotiated audited rate.

Current and Pending Support

The information in this section of the proposal provides reviewers with an opportunity to evaluate the contribution the proposed work will make to the investigators' overall research program.

The proposal must list any other current public or private research support (including in-house support) to principal investigator(s) listed on the Application for Funding Cover Page, whether or not salary support for the person(s) involved is included in the budget. FANRP must be informed of changes in pending grant support that arise after the proposal has been submitted. Nonflexible funds—including principal investigator and support staff salaries, overhead expenses, and office space—may be excluded when these funds are received through a noncompetitive process. Analogous information must be provided for any pending proposals, including this proposal, that are now being considered by, or that will be submitted in the near future to, other possible sponsors, including other USDA programs or agencies. Note that this proposal must be listed as Pending. In addition to completing the information, investigators also should include a brief statement of research objectives or project summaries for all projects listed in Current and Pending Support. Concurrent submission of identical or similar proposals to other possible sponsors will not prejudice proposal review or evaluation by the Program Manager or experts engaged by the Program Manager for this purpose. However, a proposal that duplicates or overlaps substantially with a proposal already reviewed and funded (or that will be funded) by FANRP will not be funded under this program.

Please include the following information under the heading “Current and Pending Support.”

- Record information for active and pending projects in separate sections by name, supporting agency, total funding amount, effective and expiration dates, percentage of time committed, and title of project.
- All current research to which principal investigator(s) and other senior personnel have committed a portion of their time must be listed, whether or not salary for the person involved is included in the budgets of the various projects.

Additions to Project Description

Each project description is expected to be complete without the need to refer to additional materials. However, additions to the Project Description (appendices) are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed research. This total may include reprints (papers that have been published in peer-reviewed journals) or preprints (manuscripts in press for a peer-reviewed journal must be accompanied by letter of acceptance from the publishing journal).

Manuscripts sent in support of the proposal should be single-spaced and printed on both sides of the page. Each manuscript must be identified with the name of the submitting organization, the name(s) of the principal investigator(s), and the title of the proposal, and be securely attached to each copy of the proposal. Staff of FANRP will not collate applicant proposals or proposal addenda.

Information may not be appended to a proposal to circumvent page limitations prescribed for the project description. Extraneous materials will not be used during the review process.

What/Where To Submit

An original and 12 copies of the application are required. Due to the volume of proposals that are expected and the difficulty in identifying proposals submitted in several packages, all copies of each proposal must be mailed in a single package. In addition, please ensure that each copy of the proposal is stapled securely in the upper left-hand corner.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the proposal contains all pertinent information when originally submitted. Prior to mailing, it is urged that the proposal be compared with the checklist on the inside front cover of this announcement.

To ensure prompt receipt of submitted proposals, use First Class or Express mail, or a courier service. To be considered for funding this fiscal year, proposals (an original and 12 copies) must be transmitted by the relevant date indicated on the last page of this announcement under “Deadline Dates” (as indicated by postmark or date on courier bill of lading). Late proposals will not be considered. Electronic or fax submissions will not be accepted.

Address for Submitting Proposals:

Economic Research Service
FANRP Business Office
1800 M Street, NW, Room N2129
Washington, DC 20036-5831



Proposal Disposition

FANRP will select those proposals that will be offered an award based on peer review, research priorities, and the availability of funding.

FANRP reserves the right to negotiate with the principal investigator or project director and/or with the submitting organization or institution regarding project revisions (for example, reductions in the scope of work), funding level, or period or method of support prior to recommending any project for funding.

A proposal may be withdrawn by the principal investigator at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the proposal; however, withdrawn proposals normally will not be returned. One copy of each proposal that is not selected for funding (including those that are withdrawn) will be retained by FANRP for a period of 1 year. The remaining copies will be destroyed.

SAMPLE ONLY
OUT OF DATE

Duration of Awards

The total period for which a grant or cooperative agreement is awarded (including all funded and unfunded time extensions) may not exceed 3 years.

Management Information

Once a grant or cooperative agreement has been reviewed and recommended for funding, specific management and organizational information relating to the applicant shall be requested on a one-time basis prior to the award. Copies of forms needed in fulfilling the requirements will be provided by the FANRP office.

Notice of Award

A competitive grant or cooperative agreement award document, containing the budget, terms and conditions of the award, and other necessary information, will be prepared and forwarded to each grantee or cooperator, along with a Notice of Competitive Grant or Cooperative Agreement Award, by the Administrative and Financial Management Division, ARS, USDA.

Financial Obligations

For any competitive grant or cooperative agreement awarded, the maximum financial obligation of ERS shall be the amount of funds authorized for the award. This amount will be stated on the award instrument and on the approved budget. However, in the event an erroneous amount is stated on the grant award instrument, the approved budget, or any supporting document, ERS reserves the unilateral right to make the correction and to make an appropriate adjustment in the amount of the award to align with the authorized amount.

Nothing in these guidelines or any program announcement shall obligate ERS, the Department, or the United States to take favorable action on any application received in response to any announcement, or to support any project at a particular level. Further, neither the approval of any application nor the award of any project grant or cooperative agreement shall commit or obligate the United States in any way to make any renewal, supplemental, continuation, or other award with respect to any approved application or portion of an approved application.



Post-Award Administration

Awardees will be required to ensure that all funds are expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of grant or cooperative agreement award, Departmental regulations, and the applicable Federal cost principles in effect on the date of the award. Responsibility for the use and expenditure of grant or cooperative agreement funds may not be transferred or delegated in whole or in part to another party (even if a grantee or cooperator enters into a contractual relationship with that party), unless the grant or cooperative agreement itself is transferred in whole or in part to another party by ERS.

Authorization to make changes in approved project plans, budget, period of support, etc., will be governed largely by the terms and conditions of the competitive grant award or cooperative agreement. Among other things, these terms and conditions will set forth the kinds of post-award changes that may be made by the awardee and the kinds of changes that are reserved to the FANRP Office. It is urged that all key project personnel and authorized organizational representatives read them carefully.

Release of Information

ERS receives grant and cooperative agreement proposals in confidence and will protect the confidentiality of their contents to the extent permitted by law. When a proposal results in a grant or cooperative agreement, however, it becomes part of the public record and is available to the public upon written request. Copies of proposals (including excerpts from proposals) that are not funded will not be released. Information regarding funded projects will be made available to the extent permitted under the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, and implementing USDA regulations.

Requests to obtain authorized information (and fee schedule relating to the handling of this information) or to obtain information regarding procedures related to release of grantor cooperative agreement information should be directed to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Coordinator, ARS Information Staff, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., Bldg. 1, Rm. 2248, Mail Stop 5128, Beltsville, MD 20705-5128; telephone (301) 504-1640.

Deadline Dates

To be considered for funding in fiscal 2000, proposals must have a postmark or date on courier bill of lading on or before the dates listed below:

Receipt Date	Program Area
May 25, 2000	Reaching Underserved Populations
May 25, 2000	Food Programs as a Safety Net and Client Well-Being
May 26, 2000	Child Nutrition
May 26, 2000	Behavioral Nutrition

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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